
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5584 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONALISM AND MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES TO STATUTES CONCERNING MUNICIPAL TAX COLLECTION.

SUMMARY:

This bill:

1. entitles certain regional councils of government (COG) to additional payments from the regional planning incentive account if (a) they acquired members from a different regional planning organization (RPO) or (b) the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary authorizes the payments,
2. makes changes to the statute concerning COGs' regional planning commissions (RPC),
3. eliminates the requirement that the governor's appointee to the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations be nominated by the Regional Planning Association of Connecticut,
4. authorizes regional tourism districts to create an Internet website to promote tourism (§ 9), and
5. makes technical and conforming changes.

***House Amendment "A":**

1. eliminates provisions (a) appropriating funds from the General Fund to the Department of Economic and Community Development for a grant to the Capitol Region Council of Governments and the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology to create Nutmeg Network-related services and demonstration projects and (b) requiring the OPM secretary to

conduct a planning region analysis and redesignation by January 1, 2015; and

2. modifies the funding formula for COGs.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, unless noted otherwise below

§ 8 — COG FUNDING

By law, beginning in FY 15, any COG comprised of two or more RPOs that voluntarily consolidated before January 1, 2014 receives an annual bonus payment of \$125,000 for each consolidated RPO. The bill entitles COGs located in certain redesignated planning regions (i.e., those for which the OPM secretary has changed its boundaries) to a pro rata share of the \$125,000 bonus payment for each municipality redesignated to its region. The payment applies for redesignated municipalities whose former planning regions were eliminated by OPM. It is calculated based on the ratio of each redesignated municipality's population to the total population of its former planning region (based on the most recent census), multiplied by 125,000.

The bill also authorizes the OPM secretary to provide an additional \$125,000 payment to any COG that did not consolidate before January 1, 2014 and is not located in a redesignated planning region.

These payments are in addition to the annual payments COGs receive under existing law. By law, beginning in FY 15, COGs receive annual payments of \$125,000, plus an additional 50 cents per capita.

§§ 6 & 7 — REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

By law, a COG may carry out its planning duties and responsibilities through an RPC, which it may establish through its bylaws. The bill makes several changes to the role of RPCs, including (1) specifying that they act in an advisory capacity and (2) requiring any RPC recommendation to be endorsed by the COG before becoming effective, except for recommendations on proposed subdivisions and zone or zone use changes.

By law, each COG member municipality is entitled to one seat on an RPC. Under current law, RPC members are appointed by member municipalities' planning commissions and must (1) be electors of those municipalities and (2) serve on the municipalities' planning commissions. The bill instead allows a COG's bylaws to establish the appointment process, as long as at least 50% of RPC members serve concurrently on a planning, zoning, or planning and zoning commission.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014, except for a related conforming change, which is effective January 1, 2015.

§ 1 — GOVERNOR'S APPOINTEE TO THE CONNECTICUT ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Under current law, the governor appoints an individual representing a COG or regional planning agency (RPA) to the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations from a list of nominees prepared by the Regional Planning Association of Connecticut. The bill eliminates the requirement that the appointee come from the association's list. (The association is now called the Connecticut Association of Regional Planning Organizations.)

§§ 2-5 — TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING CHANGES

The bill makes conforming changes related to the elimination of RPAs and regional councils of elected officials (CEO) after January 1, 2015 (§§ 2 & 3).

The bill also makes several technical changes (§§ 4 & 5).

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2015, except for the technical changes, which are effective on passage.

BACKGROUND

Planning Regions

By law, at least every 20 years, the OPM secretary must analyze planning region boundaries and redesignate them if necessary. Revised local planning regions will go into effect on January 1, 2015

(CGS § 16a-4c).

Within planning regions, the three types of regional planning organizations currently allowed by law are RPAs, CEOs, and COGs. PA 13-247 requires CEOs and RPAs to reestablish themselves as COGs by January 1, 2015.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 15 Nay 5 (03/25/2014)